

## **ISLAND COUNTY COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS – REGULAR SESSION JANUARY 26, 2011**

The Island County Council of Governments met in regular session on January 26, 2011 in the Commissioners' Hearing Room 102B, located at 1 NE 6<sup>th</sup> St., Coupeville. The meeting was called to order by Chair, Nancy Conard at 9:03a.m.

**Members Present:** Nancy Conard, Mayor, Town of Coupeville  
Helen Price Johnson, Island County Commissioner  
Angie Homola, Island County Commissioner  
Kelly Emerson, Island County Commissioner  
Paul Samuelson, Mayor, City of Langley  
Jim Slowik, Mayor, City of Oak Harbor  
Curt Gordon, Commissioner, South Whidbey Port District  
Benye Weber, Commissioner, Coupeville Port District

**Members Absent:**

**Also Present:** Various community members and presenters

### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

It was moved and seconded to approve the minutes of the December 22, 2010 Regular Session as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

### **ELECTION OF CHAIR AND VICE-CHAIR FOR 2011**

It was moved and seconded to nominate Nancy Conard as Chair. Motion carried unanimously.  
It was moved and seconded to nominate Angie Homola as Vice-Chair. Motion carried unanimously.

### **SECRETARIAL SUPPORT FOR 2011**

The COG Articles of Association state the secretary may be a staff employee of the Council of Governments. Island County has provided secretarial support for a number of years and now is asking that the various jurisdictions share this task due to cutbacks in staffing. Options considered are to rotate jurisdictions on an annual or quarterly basis either holding all meetings in Coupeville or rotating location with support staff or for all jurisdictions to contribute financially to pay for a secretary. The County is still willing to store agendas and minutes so people have one place where they can obtain copies. It was determined that with RTPO immediately following the COG meeting, it would be best to hold all meetings at the current location. Jim Slowik volunteered to have his office cover the next three months and a more permanent solution made at a later date.

### **JAB RECOMMENDATIONS ON 2% COMMITTEE REORGANIZATION**

The members were provided a copy of an email from Chet Ross, Chair of the JAB, regarding their recommendations. Helen reviewed the work of the COG's subcommittee that looked at the JAB operating procedures and management committee. One recommendation that came out of that effort was rotation of leadership on the JAB leadership team. The JAB suggests that with the hiring of a new marketing coordinator they are moving on a very positive path and request that

the leadership issue be left alone. Helen suggested COG agree to leaving it alone for a year and revisit the issue. Jim Slowik shared that improvements have been made since the hiring of Sherrye Wyatt and Oak Harbor may consider increasing their contribution. Others agreed that their concerns are abating. The subcommittee was complimented on its work. Helen will get the final documents together to bring back to the COG for action at the March meeting.

### **LEGISLATIVE ISSUES**

**WA State Ferries** - Helen has been working with the two FAC and others in order to lobby legislators with a single voice for ferry funding and service. She passed out copies of two bills under consideration that focus on operational efficiencies and cuts targeting union benefits over and above what other state workers receive rather than cutting service. Over 65% of costs is labor, so over time these fixes would contribute to a good amount of savings. This will take time to accomplish, but salaries and benefits need to be brought into line with other workers. Jim feels that the COG should support these efforts. Helen feels the message from the COG needs to be to look for operational efficiencies and ways to downsize the organization to meet the revenues available and put more emphasis on level of service and less on support staff. She agrees with the proposal to add 25 cents to the cost of every ticket and have it dedicated for capital purchases.

**WA State Parks** – Both Nancy & Helen had heard about possible parks closures and contacted local park rangers for verification. The rangers provided contact information for Jim Neill, Regional Park Director, and Mr. Neill was present to discuss the future of State Parks. He explained that the Parks budget is still up in the air and there are budget cuts coming. The Governor's proposed budget eliminates all General Fund money for State Parks. She asked Parks to submit a budget with 10%, 20% and 30% reductions as well as with no General Fund Support. She wants the parks to be self sustaining. It costs approximately \$100 million biennially to operate the parks statewide and camping fees and rentals (cabins, picnic shelters, etc.) bring in approximately \$35-40 million. Wages account for approximately 80% of the budget. The \$5.00 fee on license tabs has not proven to be a successful revenue raising program for Parks as many employees statewide who issue the tabs are encouraging customers to deduct it. Island County has eight parks, including the biggest and most used park, Deception Pass. Closing camping parks is not high on the list of possibilities for budget reduction. There are six day use parks around the state that are being considered for closure and none are in Island County. Fort Ward has been transferred to another government agency for operation. Even though Fort Casey brings in only about 30% of its costs, there is very little probability that it would be closed. Parks spent about \$10-\$12 million for capital projects in Island County in the last biennium. Nichols Bros. donated the new lantern for the lighthouse at Fort Casey, which is a replica of the original, with the cooperation of all three school districts shops.

### **Creation of LIO for Island County –**

Aaron Henderson, Environmental Health Director for Island County, and Morgan Schneider from Puget Sound Partnership were present to discuss the partnership effort to start working to establish a local bottom-up process for identifying important priorities and implementing the Action Agenda. The PSP was formed in 2007 to help bring together all the local efforts looking at Puget Sound eco-system function and recovery and help build a solution plan which they call the Action Agenda. The Action Agenda was developed and adopted in 2008 and revised in 2009. Since then, discussion has centered around the best ways to start thinking about implementing some of the identified activities. Establishing a Local Integrating Organization (LIO) would enable local planning, policy and funding execution of PSP's Action Agenda. The LIO would not change authority of existing organizations but is designed to provide a more

coordinated and efficient process within which to better identify and focus future work. The LIO Policy Development Committee, made up of representatives from MRC, WRAC, Island County government, Tribes and others would review the Action Agenda and make recommendations to the Executive Committee, made up of the Council of Governments and local Tribes. Several neighboring counties already have established LIOs. There was some concern raised about the effectiveness of the Puget Sound Partnership and , due to time constraints, the discussion was continued to the next COG meeting.

#### **APPROVAL OF SUSTAINABLE WHIDBEY COALITION VOUCHER**

Nancy provided a copy of the invoice for this month in the amount of \$1,105.63 as well as a report of the current financial status of the SWC, noting that funds are available to cover the cost of the invoice for today's approval. It was moved and seconded to approve payment of the voucher for Britt Conn. Motion carried unanimously. Britt would like to come update the COG on this year's program to recognize Green Businesses county wide. The SWC may apply for a NWCAA grant to help with the costs of the Green Business program. The Coalition is also involved in a trip reduction program. Angie noted that last year Washington came real close to exceeding pollution limits so the trip reduction program is desperately needed. NWCAA would be willing to come and make a presentation to COG.

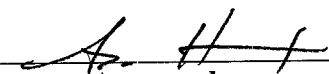
#### **OTHER ITEMS OF MUTUAL INTEREST**

Angie noted that she would not be at the RTPO meeting and a pro-tem Chair would need to be elected.

Nancy stated that she will be gone for the Feb. 23<sup>rd</sup> COG meeting. The March meeting will have a presentation by the Sustainable Whidbey Coalition and the April meeting will have an update on the 2% Interlocal Agreement.

As there was no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 11:04 a.m.

2/23/11

  
Approved